

Chapter 18 - Community Relations and Public Participation (REDACTED)

18.1 Applicability

This Community Relations and Public Participation Plan (CRP) is applicable to all civil servant and contractor employees and tenant personnel at Ames Research Center (Ames), Moffett Federal Airfield (MFA), and Crows Landing Flight Facility.

18.2 Purpose

This chapter describes procedures that Ames will use to communicate environmental issues to its stakeholders. Ames disseminates timely and accurate environmental information and is responsive to stakeholder questions and concerns. The Community Relations Plan (CRP) represents an overall effort by Ames to implement proactive policies that reflect its commitment to protecting the environment through compliance with Federal, state, and local environmental regulations and maintaining a dialogue with the nonregulated community. Its objectives include:

- Strengthening communication channels between NASA Ames and the local community.
- Responding to stakeholder questions and concerns.
- Disseminating environmental information to internal (facility personnel) and external stakeholders.
- Encouraging community involvement in evaluation processes.

Over the years, Federal facility communications with stakeholders have greatly improved, with community and Federal facility representatives learning much from each other. Ames is institutionalizing improved public participation practices and is committed to enhancing any and all communication measures currently employed. The CRP will be updated, as necessary, to reflect changes in environmental laws and regulations, and lessons learned.

18.3 Policy

It is the policy of the Ames Research Center (ARC) to foster employees awareness of environmental regulations through active information dissemination, and to provide opportunities for the local community to discuss and comment on Ames' projects and operations that impact the environment in accordance with applicable laws and Ames Policy Directive (APD 8800.4, Ames Environmental Programs).

18.4 Authority

There are several public notification requirements that Ames complies with and that are covered in other chapters of this handbook; e.g., Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA). However, community relations and public involvement - not simply notification - are driven by following all relevant Federal, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to the management of the environment including, but not limited to:

1. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42, U.S.C. Sections 4321 through 4345)
2. 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500, Council on Environmental Quality Regulations
3. Freedom of Information Act of 1996 (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552)
4. Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13101 et seq.)

5. NASA Procedures and Guidelines NPG 8580.1, Implementing The National Environmental Policy Act And Executive Order 12114
6. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.), including the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (42 U.S.C. 11001 et seq.)
7. Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA); Public Law 99-499
8. California Code of Regulations (CCR), Titles 22 and 23, Sections 67100.4 and 67100.5
9. 40 CFR Part 93, Determining Conformity of Federal Actions to State or Federal Implementation Plans
10. Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations
11. Executive Order 13101 of September 14, 1998, Greeting the Government through Waste Prevention Recycling and Federal Acquisition
12. Executive Order 13148 of April 22, 2000, Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management.

18.5 Responsibilities

18.5.1 Environmental Services Office, Code QE (Environmental Office)

The Environmental Office manages the environmental public relations program at Ames. This program encompasses hosting monthly information briefings for Ames Resident agencies and NASA Research Park Partners; maintaining the environmental libraries at the City of Sunnyvale, City of Patterson, City of Mountain View and Ames; placing public notices in the newspaper; mailing environmental documents; hosting public meetings; preparing and distributing fact sheets; hosting quarterly brown bags on various environmental topics, maintaining mailing lists; and attending community events.

18.5.2 Development and Communications Office, Code DX

REDACTED

18.6 Definitions

18.6.1 Area of Investigation (AOI)

An area at Ames where the soil and/or groundwater may be contaminated.

18.6.2 Business Plan

A hazardous materials inventory and emergency spill preparedness and response plan required by the California Health and Safety Code. At Ames, these are called Building Emergency Action Plans (BEAPs).

18.6.3 Community Relations

A program to inform and involve the public in environmental clean-up and environmental protection initiatives and to respond to community concerns.

18.6.4 Community Right-to-Know Regulations

Laws requiring hazardous materials inventory reporting from businesses, with the intent of informing residents about storage of hazardous materials in their community.

18.6.5 Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)

An oversight committee established by Congress as part of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The CEQ establishes NEPA policy and oversees Federal agency

implementation of the NEPA process and acts as a referee for interagency disputes regarding the adequacy of assessments.

18.6.6 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The State of California's basic charter for protection of the environment. It establishes policy, sets goals, and details procedures intended to protect and enhance the state's environment. CEQA served as the model during the design of NEPA, the corresponding Federal act.

18.6.7 Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

A State of California regulatory agency that is responsible for protecting public health and the environment from harmful exposure to hazardous substances, without unnecessarily impacting sustainable growth and development.

18.6.8 Environmental Assessment (EA)

A concise public document that analyzes the environmental impacts of a proposed Federal action and provides sufficient evidence to determine the level of significance of the impacts.

18.6.9 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The detailed public document that is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) when an agency proposes a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

18.6.10 Federal Facility Environmental Restoration Dialogue Committee (FFERDC)

A committee chartered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide a forum to refine and further develop issues related to environmental restoration activities at Federal facilities. Representatives from a broad range of interest groups, particularly stakeholders in the restoration process, serve on the FFERDC (also known as the "Keystone Committee").

18.6.11 Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

A public document that briefly presents the reasons why an action will not have a significant impact on the human environment, and therefore, will not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

18.6.12 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NEPA is the United States' basic national charter for protection of the environment. It establishes policy, sets goals, and details procedures intended to protect and enhance the environment.

18.6.13 Notice of Availability (NOA)

A written notice that is published in the Federal Register and/or local news media that announces the availability of draft and final Environmental Impact Statements for public review.

18.6.14 Notice of Intent (NOI)

The first formal step in the environmental impact statement process, consisting of a notice with the following information: a description of the proposed action and alternatives; a description of the agency's proposed scoping process, including scoping meetings; and the name and address of the persons to contact within the lead agency regarding the environmental impact statement.

18.6.15 Record of Decision (ROD)

A public document that states the agency's final decision, rationale behind that decision, and any commitments to monitoring and mitigation. It is signed by the Associate Administrator for Headquarters, Code R.

18.6.16 Stakeholder

Someone affected by or otherwise having an interest in or the ability to influence the outcome of Federal facility clean-up decisions or other Federal decisions with potential environmental impacts.

18.7 Regulatory Requirements

18.7.1 Public Review of NEPA Documents

The extent of consultation and public involvement in EA and EIS preparation should be consistent with the magnitude and complexity of the proposed action, its potential environmental effects, and the potential for controversy regarding environmental issues.

1. The EA Process

- Unless there is a likelihood of significant environmental impacts or public interest, there is limited public involvement during EA preparation.
- Draft EAs must be made available to the public for 30 days, with a NOA published in local newspapers such as the *San Jose Mercury News*, *La Oferta Review*, *Palo Alto Weekly*, *Sunnyvale Sun*, *Patterson Irrigator*, *Modesto Bee* and *Mountain View Voice*, as applicable. Draft FONSI's are made available with the draft EA.
- Ames mails all draft FONSI's, and makes available all final documents, to the core mailing list of environmental groups, regulators, and interested individuals (see Appendix B).

2. EIS Process

- Draft EISs must be made available to the public (40 CFR Section 1506.6), with a NOA published in the Federal Register.
- Comments to draft EISs must be solicited from appropriate Federal, tribal, state, and local agencies, as well as from the public, specifically "those persons or organizations who may be interested or affected" (40 CFR Section 1503.1(a)(4)).
- All comments received on the draft EIS must be considered in the preparation of the final EIS, and the final EIS must include responses to the comments received. Final EISs are noted in the Federal Register, and interested parties may submit comments on final EISs prior to final decisions.
- Records of Decision (RODs) on EISs must be disseminated to all those who commented on the draft or final EIS (40 CFR Section 6.400(e)). No public review is required after issuance of the ROD.

18.7.2 California Environmental Quality Act Public Involvement

Although Federal agencies are not subject to CEQA, in some instances public participation requirements are implemented by state agencies involved in Ames actions. This occurs where a state agency, e.g., the DTSC, has oversight of environmental investigations and removal actions at Ames. This is the case at several of the Areas of Investigation, discussed further in Section 18.9.1.

18.7.3 State and Federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Public Involvement

The DTSC's public participation requirements are detailed in their "Public Participation and Procedures Manual," used as a guide by Ames, in addition to extensive coordination with the DTSC's designated Public Participation Specialist. Public participation mechanisms, as directed by the DTSC, can include public hearings or meetings, fact sheet or newsletter preparation, press releases, and other types of outreach activities.

18.8 Geographical Setting

18.8.1 Community Profile

ARC is bordered by the communities of Mountain View and Sunnyvale, California. Both cities, situated in the heart of Silicon Valley, have been supportive of Ames and the former Naval Air Station since the 1930s. These cities have taken an active interest in the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission decisions related to the transfer of the Naval Air Station to Ames as the custodial Federal agency, and have participated actively in Ames stewardship issues, including the environmental review process for the NASA Ames Development Plan (NAPD).

18.8.2 Mountain View, CA

The City of Mountain View is located 10 miles north of San Jose and 34 miles south of San Francisco and is served by several major highways, bus routes, rail, and air services. In addition, Mountain View is the northern extension of the regional light rail transit line from San Jose and Santa Clara, which provide opportunities for commuters in the region. Mountain View has a strong and diversified local economy. Numerous high-technology electronics companies and biotechnology firms are located in Mountain View. In addition, Mountain View enjoys a mix of retail, executive offices, research and development firms, and professional services.

According to the Chamber of Commerce profile of Mountain View, the city's resident population is 72,200; during business hours, however, that population increases to over 100,000. The resident population has a median household income of \$69,362 (2000 U.S. census) and the median age of residents is 34.6 years.

Mountain View's citizenry enjoys a well-supported city infrastructure and broad array of recreation, entertainment, cultural, and arts resources and events. The downtown area is bustling and vibrant, demonstrating the success of the city's redevelopment efforts.

18.8.3 Sunnyvale, CA

The City of Sunnyvale is just southeast of Mountain View. It is located 44 miles south of San Francisco, and 10 miles northwest of San Jose. Residents are well educated with forty-six percent holding at least an associate's degree (Claritas, 07/15/2002). Nationally, Sunnyvale has one of the highest incomes per household coupled with one of the lowest crime rates for a city of its size.

Leading industries are high-technology research and development, computer systems, semiconductor and electronics manufacturing, aerospace, and defense systems. As of 2002, Lockheed-Martin Missiles and Space is the largest single employer in Sunnyvale.

According to the Chamber of Commerce profile of Sunnyvale, the city's resident population is 132,215. The resident population has a median age is 34.3 years and the median household income of \$74, 409.

The city government of Sunnyvale has been nationally recognized as well-managed and efficient. Included in the city's services is an innovative and cost-effective Public Safety Department, which combines the traditional fire and police services into a single unit.

Like its Mountain View neighbor, the City of Sunnyvale supports a comprehensive infrastructure. The city maintains over 700 acres of parks and open space, offers a municipal golf course and tennis complex, a Performing Arts Theater, community recreation and swim center, and a variety of additional recreational facilities.

18.8.4 Community Concerns

In recent years, issues of community concern have mainly involved noise pollution, air pollution, traffic and housing. Wind tunnel operations and proposed flightline projects have generated considerable public interest related to these issues. Ames has put considerable effort into thorough public participation. Most recently, the NRP's Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement created numerous concerns regarding the development of housing, and increase in traffic surrounding Ames, and air quality. ARC maintains regular communications with many active members of the local community. Appendix B presents a list of individuals who receive all published environmental documents and public notification.

18.9 Environmental Setting

REDACTED

18.10 Stakeholder Involvement

It is Ames' intent not only to inform stakeholders about past contamination problems, but about the environmental acceptability of current practices, as well as proposed actions. In this vein, the community will be notified upon the discovery of any newly found contamination or any proposed actions requiring NEPA documentation - even those that are not expected to have offsite impacts. Stakeholder involvement encompasses three main issue areas at Ames:

1. NEPA project documentation: as custodial agency, Ames will address the whole ARC facility and involve the community in all proposals requiring NEPA documentation.
2. Environmental investigations and clean-up activities.
3. Environmental Justice (EJ): EJ is discussed further in Chapter 19 of this handbook.
4. Stakeholder involvement takes two main forms at NASA Ames: internal and external community involvement.

18.11 Communications with the Internal Community

The internal community at Ames includes Ames management and civil servant employees, contractor staff, students, Resident Agency personnel, and NASA Research Park Partners.

A variety of communication channels are employed to promote the understanding and involvement of the internal community. Those channels include, among others:

- ARC, Resident Agencies and NASA Research Park Partners personnel are invited to Environmental Health and Safety Monthly Information Briefings
- The Ames Main Library and REDACTED Environmental Library (REDACTED) contain NEPA documentation, sampling reports, and other environmental site information.
- The Ames Astrogram newsletter.
- Centerwide E-mails
- Ames Earth Day Fair and other onsite events.
- The Environmental Office (World Wide Web home page at <http://q.arc.nasa.gov/qe>).
- Ames Management Council and Monthly Management (MMR) Review meetings.

18.12 Communications with the External Community

The external community includes all other stakeholders - regulators, community activists, public officials, and interested individuals.

A variety of communication channels are employed to promote the understanding and involvement of the external community. Those channels include, among others:

- Public hearings, meetings, and open houses.

- Special tours of NASA facilities and/or wetlands and wildlife observation tours, hosted by the Environmental Office and the External Affairs Office.
- Breakfast meetings and other dialogue-building activities with groups.
- News and information releases, coordinated by the External Affairs Office.
- Dialogue with elected representatives, mainly conducted by the External Affairs Office.
- Maintenance of an information repository at the City of Sunnyvale Main Library and the City of Mountain View Library.
- Notifications of public meetings and document availability via direct mail, the World Wide Web, and published notification in the predominant local newspaper and non-English newspapers.
- Response to written inquiries and comments in a timely and thorough manner (see Appendix C: Request for Information/Comments Submittal Form).
- Participation in local activities and events, such as community festivals and Earth Day fairs.
- EMS home page maintained by Headquarters (Code JE) at http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codej/codeje/je_site/ems/about_ems.html
- Information exchange via civic organizations and community service groups.
- Participation in NAVY Restoration Advisory Board (RAB).

As needed, Ames will conduct public meetings both at the Visitor Center outside the facility gates and at community centers in the local area to give citizens an opportunity to comment on Ames' environmental processes, to ask questions, and to voice concerns. These meetings will generally be conducted during evening hours to encourage high attendance.

All meetings will be publicized through direct mail notifications to individuals and groups on Ames' core environmental mailing list (Appendix B), as well as through paid advertisement in local newspapers serving the greater Santa Clara County region. Notification of all public hearings, meetings, and availability of documentation for public review will appear in the *San Jose Mercury News*, *La Oferta Review*, a Spanish language newspaper, and Ames' own *Astrogram* newsletter. In some cases, the local papers, *Sunnyvale Sun* and *Mountain View Voice*, and the *Palo Alto Weekly* will also be used.

To allow greater public access and involvement, information repositories have been established. They contain all documentation required under NEPA provisions, documents relating to Ames' site investigations and clean-up, and environmental plans and procedures. Draft documents will be filed in a timely manner to provide sufficient observance of public review and comment periods. The repositories have been established at:

City of Sunnyvale Public Library

Reference Desk

665 West Olive Avenue

Sunnyvale, CA 94086

Telephone: (408) 730-7300

File name: NASA Ames Research Center Environmental File

City of Mountain View Public Library

Reference Desk

585 Franklin Street

Mountain View, CA 94035

Telephone: (650) 903-6887

File name: NASA Ames Research Center Environmental File

Finally, community members are encouraged to request to be added to the Ames core environmental mailing list.

18.13 Metrics

- Internal Communication:
 - % of NASA employees and contractors aware APD 8800.4 and APG 8800.3 location. Goal: 100%
 - # of internal public events hosted by Code QE annually. Goal: 12
 - # of fact sheets mailed to public mailing list/# of Ames' projects with significant impact on external community Goal: 100%
 - Annual update of mailing list Goal: 100%
- Internal and External Communication:
 - # of documents placed in internal and external libraries/# of documents required by environmental policy to be made available to the public. Goal: 100%

18.14 Appendices

18.14.1 Appendix A: NASA Ames Points of Contact

REDACTED

18.14.2 Appendix B: Core Environmental Mailing List

REDACTED

18.14.3 Appendix C: Request for Information/Comments Submittal Form

**Request for Information/Comments Submittal Form
on Environmental Investigations at
NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, CA 94035-1000**

Name _____ Date _____

Mailing Address _____

City/Zip _____ Phone Number () _____
(in the event that inquiry clarification is required by Ames staff)

Affiliated Organization _____

In reference to Ames Project Documentation: _____

Please specify the information being requested and/or comments being submitted.
Attach a separate sheet if necessary.

Received Date (Ames) _____ Received By _____

Please note that an information repository has been established at: **City of Sunnyvale Library**
Reference Desk
6615 West Drive Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(408) 738-7300

Submit Form to: **REDACTED**
NASA Ames Research Center
Environmental Services Office
REDACTED
Moffett Field, CA 94035-1000

Thank you for your submittal.
A response can generally be expected no later than 30 days from submittal.

END OF DOCUMENT